

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 00136 100925Z

16

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCI-06 SCEM-02 INT-08 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 STR-08 CIEP-02 SAJ-01 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 NIC-01 DRC-01 IO-14 NEA-10

AF-10 /178 W

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R 091505Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7205

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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USMISSION BERLIN

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SUBJECT: POLISH LINE ON ENERGY CRISIS EMERGING

REF: A) MOSCOW 0200; B) WARSAW 0036; C) WARSAW 6516;

D) WARSAW 0135

1. IN ITS REGULAR COLUMN "THE WEEK IN THE WORLD" FOR
JANUARY 6 TRYBUNA LUDU OFFERS AN UNUSUALLY BLUNT INTER-
PRETATION BY BOLES LAW WOJCICKI OF THE ENERGY CRISIS
AND THE "GLARING CONTRASTS", AS THE SUB-TITLE PROCLAIMS,
BETWEEN THE GLOOM WITH WHICH THE WEST GREETED THE NEW
YEAR AND THE OPTIMISM OF THE "SOCIALIST CAMP". "ALL THE
COUNTRIES OF THE SOCIALIST COMMUNITY" ENTERED THE NEW
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PAGE 02 WARSAW 00136 100925Z

YEAR WITH A "HUGE" ECONOMIC OUTPUT ACHIEVED IN 1973

AND WITH ASSURANCE OF FURTHER PROGRESS, ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, WHEREAS WESTERN LEADERS WERE WARNING AGAINST INFLATION AND THE WESTERN PRESS WAS HOLDING UP ARAB OIL POLICIES AS A SCAPEGOAT FOR THE CRISIS. WITHOUT NEGATING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENERGY CRISIS, THE ARTICLE CONTINUES, IT MUST BE EMPHASIZED THAT THE CRISIS ONLY SHARPENED THE ALREADY VISIBLE INTERNAL CONFLICTS OF CAPITALISM, SUCH AS THE DEEPENING OF INEQUITIES IN SHARING NATIONAL INCOME BROUGHT ON BY UNRESTRAINED INFLATION.

2. ALL THIS POSES CERTAIN PROBLEMS FOR POLAND AS A DEVELOPING COUNTRY, THE ARTICLE ACKNOWLEDGES, BUT THE SOCIALIST SYSTEM DIMINISHES THEIR IMPACT. "THANKS TO" THE "STRUCTURE OF OUR ENERGY RESOURCES", TO "OUR COAL-MINING POTENTIAL", TO CEMA INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES, TO THE SOVIET SUPPLY OF OIL AT STABLE PRICES AND OF OTHER RAW MATERIALS, "OUR ECONOMIC PLAN IS NOT THREATENED BY THE ENERGY CRISIS AND THE FLUCTUATIONS OF RAW-MATERIAL PRICES IN THE CAPITALIST WORLD". NEVERTHELESS, THE ARTICLE NOTES ALMOST IN PASSING, THE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED GOVERNMENT PROGRAM FOR CONSERVATION OF ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS (REF B) IS NECESSARY SINCE POLAND "PURCHASES A CERTAIN PORTION OF PETROLEUM AND SPECIAL KINDS OF GASOLINE AND OIL" IN THE WEST. (VICE FOREIGN MINISTER BISZTYGA RECENTLY TOLD THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR THAT POLAND'S ANNUAL IMPORTS OF REFINED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS FROM NON-CEMA SOURCES AMOUNT TO 600,000 TONS).

3. COMMENT: THIS TRYBUNA LUDU ARTICLE PRESENTS THE CLEAREST POLISH PROPAGANDA LINE ON THE ENERGY CRISIS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS WE HAVE YET SEEN, AND DRAWS TOGETHER SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THE POLISH INTERPRETATION, SOME OF WHICH HAD BEEN INDICATED INDIVIDUALLY IN PREVIOUS MEDIA COMMENTARY. ACCENTUATING THEIR OWN AND CEMA STRONG POINTS, THE POLES HAVE BEEN CITING THEIR LARGE COAL RESERVES AND WELL DEVELOPED MINING INDUSTRY AND THEIR INCREASING PRODUCTION OF ELECTRICITY, AS WELL AS CEMA COOPERATION AND RELIANCE ON SOVIET OIL AND RAW MATERIALS. AT THE SAME TIME, THE POLISH MEDIA HAVE BEEN DUTIFULLY REPORTING WESTERN ENERGY DIFFICULTIES, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 WARSAW 00136 100925Z

UNITED STATES.

4. EXCEPT FOR THE WOJCICKI ARTICLE, HOWEVER, MOST OF THIS COVERAGE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY SUBTLE. COMMENTARY HERALDING POLAND'S COAL INDUSTRY OR RECENTLY OPENED ELECTRIC-POWER PLANTS, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN MATCHED AGAINST REPORTS OF WESTERN ENERGY PROBLEMS. REPORTING ON THE U.S. SITUATION HAS BEEN RELATIVELY OBJECTIVE, WITH SOME EFFORTS

TO POINT OUT THAT THE U.S., BEING MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS, IS LESS AFFECTED THAN WESTERN EUROPE. MINDFUL THAT ALL THIS COMMENTARY IS AIMED PRIMARILY AT THE DOMESTIC AUDIENCE, WE WOULD JUDGE THIS MORE SUBTLE APPROACH TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE WITH POLISH READERS THAN THAT OF THE WOJCICKI PIECE WHOSE OPEN CROWING WILL PROBABLY SET MANY OF THEM TO SCOFFING.

5. THE ACHILLES' HEEL IN POLAND'S ECONOMIC SITUATION-- AS WELL AS IN TERMS OF ITS OWN PUBLIC OPINION--MAY WELL DERIVE FROM THE PRESSURE THE POLES ARE EVIDENTLY RECEIVING FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND POSSIBLY OTHER CEMA PARTNERS WHO WANT A SHARE OF POLAND'S COAL AND ELECTRIC OUTPUT THAT COULD OTHERWISE BE EXPORTED TO THE WEST TO HELP PAY FOR POLAND'S HIGH LEVEL OF WESTERN IMPORTS (REF C). ADDITIONALLY, THE LONGER RANGE PROSPECT OF A WESTERN ECONOMIC RECESSION MAY WELL IMPINGE ON THE WESTERN MARKETS THAT POLAND HAS CLEARLY HOPED TO CULTIVATE (REF D). THIS POINT HAS BEEN RAISED ONLY BRIEFLY IN THE POLISH PRESS SO FAR, AND WE DOUBT THAT SERIOUS ECONOMISTS HERE ARE JOINING IN THE KIND OF CROWING OVER WESTERN ENERGY TROUBLES REPRESENTED BY WOJCICKI'S ARTICLE.

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